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Frank Lindsay

Interviewed by:

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JH: I know you've talked, well, this morning, about things that I wanted to talk about, but, I'm sorry, I wasn't here. But I hope you don't mind going over...

FL: Not a bit.

JH: ...some of it. And I find chronologically is the best bet. If we could just begin with how you got into OSS in Cairo, and what happened after that—the highlights, maybe some lessons learned, or not learned...

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was promoting and leading a group that was trying to do this. And this, I guess, sort of caused the crystallization, and all the things that were beginning to worry me.

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JH: Well, now, according to the little bio that I have, you actually wrote a fairly strong piece, warning that the plan for a rollback "of Communists in Eastern Europe wasn't going to work too well."

FL: Well, I don't know what ever happened to it, but the story...I wrote such a memorandum. I guess it must have been five or ten pages—maybe more. Essentially saying at this time, and these conditions in Russia, and our limited capabilities, and the fact it is not a wartime situation, I don't think this is on. Allen Dulles had just arrived from New York and became Deputy Director for Operations, I think. I've forgotten.

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JH: Yeah.

FL: Well, Allen had been an old friend for a long time. And I had been in another part of some of his operations, although I didn't know it at the time, when I was in Croatia, and in Belgrade. So I...it was at the time that the Eisenhower Administration was coming in. It was a time when Foster Dulles, his brother, had been making speeches about rolling back the Iron Curtain. And so, I thought that a memorandum ought to go to the NSC with sort of, "This is our experience. What we've learned up to now." And I can't remember, it was so long ago, what I...how diplomatic I was, or not diplomatic. But, anyhow, I was trying to convey, "Think this over before you push it too far." And I remember going and

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spending a Saturday morning with Allen. And he went over it, line-by-line. And every once in a while, he'd explode with, "Frank, you can't say that." And then we'd fight over the wording of that. And I probably compromised more than I should have. And, I guess,

we finally finished the memorandum, and it was up to him as to what he was going to do with the memorandum. I don't know whether he ever sent it to the White House. The only thing that's been found in the Eisenhower papers is a memorandum that I wrote to Gordon Gray, in which I put in a paragraph which, very briefly, summarized what was in this long memorandum to Allen.

JH: Gordon Gray was the NSC back then, wasn't he?

FL: Yes.

JH: Yeah.

FL: Which confirmed, at least to my own satisfaction, that I, in fact, had written such a memorandum. Even though I couldn't find the damned thing. But, as I say, it may perfectly...it may have been that Allen just said, "To hell with that," and threw it into the waste basket. Or it may have gone to C. D. Jackson. And I think C. D. who was

probably...who was a very aggressive, gung-ho person, probably would have rejected it, too.

JH: Yeah.

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FL: But if you ever find it, I would be most grateful. I'd be fascinated to see it.

JH: Well, I'll see what I can do, Frank. I haven't seen it so far, but there's a lot of stuff I haven't seen. So, you know.

FL: Anyhow, it was in Allen's hands the last I saw of it.

JH: Okay.

FL: And I'm almost certain I showed it to Frank Wisner. I clearly should have, and I must have shown it to him. And I have no recollection...I have slight recollection that he agreed and said it should go on to Allen. But that is a dim recollection.

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JH: Well, then you left in 1953, I gather?

FL: Yes.

JH: Was it for any particular reason?

FL: I guess this is part of the reason. I don't think it's the only reason. I think probably a part of it was that I had been involved in foreign affairs during the wartime, the Marshall Plan, the UN. I considered going into the Foreign Service, and decided not to. Then,

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To get the European countries to work with each other in supporting their own recovery. They all think of...the view of the Marshall Plan, mostly, it was American dollars that...and the unknown part of the Marshall Plan, the unrecognized, is that we got them to set up a system which we essentially engineered and sold to them, which would mean that France would provide the food. Germany would provide the equipment. They were to pool their resources. And this was a way to pool their resources without putting in Marshall Plan money to bootstrap their own post-War recovery. So. This is way off your point. But, something I'm still trying to work on.

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JH: Good. Let me just ask a couple of things. Were you still here when the East German riots took place in '53?

FL: Yes. I think I was.

JH: Did you, was there any back and forth on what should be done? Any support that should be given?

FL: I'm awfully vague on that. I'm not sure.

JH: That's okay. Now, well, of course, you were gone when the Hungarian revolution....

FL: Yes.

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JH: But, do you have any thoughts about that? What we did, I guess, was proper. We didn't try to intervene there. Yet, it was hard on some people to....

FL: It was very hard on Frank Wisner.

JH: Exactly. Yeah.

FL: Well, I wrote an article for the *New Leader* which was later reprinted in *Life* magazine, in which I, in sort of a daydream, was saying, "Suppose, instead of doing nothing, the UN had told the Russians, 'We are sending a UN Mission, and, with an international military component, to Budapest, to supervise what's going on under the name of the UN.'" I can't remember much about...little more detail than that. And put the Russians in the position of having to attack a UN flag, and a UN economy. Well, that was, you know, one of those hopeless sorts of things that one thinks about. No, I thought it was a very sad time for Frank.

JH: Yeah. He, I guess, never really completely got over that. I didn't know him beforehand. So, when I knew him, you know, he'd been through it. But he was still a very effective I must say, as far as I could tell. One thing about him was, there was no one that ever came through town that amounted to anything, that didn't either stay with them, or have dinner with them.

FL: Oh, yes.

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